

PRAAYAAS TIMES

CA CAPSULE
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PRAYAAS

MAINS FOCUS

2.General Studies II

2.1 Secular Foundations of the Indian Constitution: Beyond the Preamble

News Context: -

- Recent political discourse has reignited **debates** over the legitimacy of incorporating the terms "**socialist**" and "**secular**" into the **Preamble through the 42nd Amendment in 1976**.

Syllabus of Mains – GS-2- Indian Constitution—Historical Underpinnings, Evolution, Features, Amendments, Significant Provisions and Basic Structure.

Historical Background of the 42nd Amendment

Political Context Behind the Amendment:

- Enacted during the Emergency under Prime Minister Indira Gandhi; often called the "**Mini-Constitution**".
- Marked by Indira Gandhi's **leftward economic shift**, including: Nationalisation of banks, Abolition of privy purses
- Emergence of strong political opposition, especially from the **Bharatiya Jana Sangh** (now BJP).
- Aimed at **justifying the Emergency** as a means to preserve national unity and authority.

Key Features of the 42nd Amendment (1976):

- Added the words "**Socialist**" and "**Secular**" to the Preamble.
- Introduced "**Integrity**" to strengthen the ideal of fraternity.
- Inserted **Fundamental Duties** into the Constitution (Part IVA).
- Expanded the **Directive Principles of State Policy**.
- Reduced the powers of the judiciary**, especially regarding judicial review.
- Froze the **delimitation of parliamentary constituencies** until 2000.

Aftermath:

- Many provisions were rolled back by the **44th Amendment (1978)** under the Janata Party government.
- However, the additions to the **Preamble**— "Secular" and "Socialist"—were **retained**, indicating their long-term constitutional significance.

Constitutional Provisions Beyond the Preamble Reflecting Secularism: -

1. Fundamental Rights (Part III)

- Article 14:** Guarantees equality before law and equal protection of laws; the State cannot favor or discriminate based on religion.
- Article 15:** Prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth in public spaces.
- Article 16:** Ensures equality of opportunity in public employment, explicitly prohibiting discrimination on religious grounds.
- Article 19(1)(a):** Protects freedom of speech and expression, allowing peaceful articulation of religious beliefs.
- Article 25:** Secures freedom of conscience and the right to freely profess, practice, and propagate religion.
- Article 26:** Grants religious denominations the right to manage their own affairs in matters of religion.
- Article 27:** Forbids compulsion of citizens to pay taxes that are used for the promotion or maintenance of any particular religion.
- Article 28:** Restricts religious instruction in institutions wholly maintained out of State funds, ensuring secular public education.

2. Directive Principles of State Policy (Part IV)

- Article 44:** Directs the State to secure a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) for all citizens, promoting equality irrespective of religious practices in civil matters like marriage and inheritance.

3. Fundamental Duties (Part IVA)

- **Article 51A(e):** Calls upon citizens to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood transcending religious differences.
- **Article 51A(f):** Emphasizes the duty to value and preserve the rich heritage of India's composite culture, rooted in religious diversity.

4. Other Related Provisions

- **Article 25(2):** Allows the State to regulate or restrict secular activities associated with religious practice, such as temple administration or banning harmful customs.
- **Article 29 and 30:** Protect the rights of religious and linguistic minorities to conserve their culture and establish educational institutions.
- **Article 290A:** Provides for payment of certain sums to religious institutions, but this is administered without religious favouritism, reflecting neutral support.

Judicial Interpretation of Secularism: -

- **Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala (1973) :** The Supreme Court held that secularism is part of the **Basic Structure** of the Constitution, which cannot be amended by Parliament.
- **S.R. Bommai v. Union of India (1994) :** The Court gave an extensive interpretation of secularism, stating that the State has no religion, and secularism means treating all religions equally and protecting religious minorities.
- **Aruna Roy v. Union of India (2002) :** The Court clarified that secularism does not mean hostility towards religion but denotes **equal treatment of all religions** by the State.
- **M.P. Gopalakrishnan Nair v. State of Kerala (2005) :** The Court reiterated that secularism under the Indian Constitution stands for **tolerance, equality, and equal treatment of all religions**.
- **Recent 2024 Court judgement:** Recently the Supreme Court dismissed petitions challenging the constitutional validity of the 42nd amendment by which the words 'secular' and 'socialist' were added to the Preamble of the Constitution during the Emergency days in 1976.

Challenges to Secularism in India: -

- **Communalism and polarization:** Rise of identity-based mobilization and communal rhetoric during elections weakens the secular fabric.
- **Majoritarianism:** Attempts to impose majority religious values on minorities leads to alienation and exclusion.
- **Religious violence:** Mob lynchings, riots, and targeted attacks against communities disrupt social harmony.
- **State involvement in religion:** Government control of temples and funding of pilgrimages blurs the line between State and religion.
- **Electoral misuse of religion:** Use of religious symbols and appeals in campaigns violates the spirit of secular democracy.
- **Hate speech and fake news:** Digital platforms are used to spread misinformation and incite communal hatred.

**Way Forward: -**

- **Strict enforcement of constitutional provisions:** Uphold Articles 14, 15, 25–28 through proactive judicial and administrative action.
- **Depoliticization of religion:** Ensure strict implementation of the Representation of People Act, 1951 to curb use of religion in elections.
- **Promote civic nationalism:** Focus on shared constitutional values rather than religious identity to build inclusive citizenship.
- **Reform of personal laws:** Move gradually towards a Uniform Civil Code ensuring gender justice while respecting diversity.
- **Digital regulation against hate speech:** Enforce stronger monitoring of social media platforms to curb communal misinformation.

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- **Responsible media conduct:** Enforce media ethics to prevent sensationalism and hate propagation in religious matters.

Conclusion: -

- The incorporation of the terms "socialist" and "secular" into the Preamble through the 42nd Amendment has long been debated, particularly concerning its constitutional legitimacy. However, the Supreme Court has reaffirmed that the inclusion of "socialist" and "secular" in the Preamble has gained widespread acceptance and does not impede governance or legislation. Instead, these terms reflect the core values of the Constitution and continue to guide India's democratic and inclusive framework.

Question for Practice: -

- How is secularism reflected in the Indian Constitution beyond its mention in the Preamble? Illustrate with relevant provisions and judicial interpretations. (150W-10M)

2.2 Five Years of NEP 2020: Assessing the Progress of NIPUN Bharat

News Context: -

- As NEP 2020 completes five years, its flagship initiative **NIPUN Bharat** enters a critical phase. It is now time to evaluate its early outcomes and future direction.

Syllabus of Mains – GS-2- Issues Relating to Development and Management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

What is NIPUN Bharat?

- **NIPUN (National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy) Bharat** operationalises NEP's foundational learning goals.
- Target: Ensure that every child in **Grades 1–3** attains foundational skills in reading and arithmetic by **Grade 3**.
- Launched by the **Ministry of Education** in July 2021 as part of the **Samagra Shiksha** programme.
- With **₹2,700 crore** annual funding, it is the **world's largest foundational learning programme**, reaching over **5 crore children** and **17 lakh teachers** across **6 lakh schools**.

Key Features of the Mission: -

- **Direct funding design:** Allocates ₹500 per student/year for teaching-learning materials (TLMs), and ₹150 per teacher for training and resources.
- **State-led implementation:** Allows flexibility for states to adapt FLN tools (e.g., student workbooks, structured lesson plans).
- **District-level empowerment:** Strengthening district FLN units for tracking, mentoring, and assessment (e.g., 4 lakh assessments in UP, 57,000 classroom visits in Odisha).
- **Monitoring mechanisms:** Annual assessments like ASER and Foundational Learning Study track progress and learning outcomes.

Achievements So Far: -

1. Positive learning outcomes:

- Madhya Pradesh saw a **10% increase** in students' oral reading fluency between 2023 and 2024.
- ASER 2024 recorded the **strongest FLN gains in two decades**, with a **7% rise** in Grade 3 students' literacy and numeracy from 2022 to 2024.

2. High fund utilization:

- Nearly **100% of allocated funds** are being used by states, indicating demand and momentum.

3. Structured classroom reforms:

- Use of workbooks, teacher guides, and digital tools has improved classroom engagement and pedagogical delivery.

Challenges in Implementation: -

- **Inconsistent quality across states:** Some states have advanced rapidly, while others lag in capacity building and monitoring.
- **Overburdened teachers:** Administrative duties and understaffing affect classroom implementation quality.
- **Digital divide:** Use of EdTech in classrooms is uneven due to infrastructure gaps.
- **Need for early childhood support:** Balvatika (pre-school) coverage is limited, affecting school readiness.

Way Forward: Towards NIPUN 2.0: -

- **Extend mission timeline beyond 2027:** To solidify gains and ensure long-term impact, NIPUN should continue for **another five years**.
- **Broaden coverage:** Expand to cover **Balvatika to Grade 5**, ensuring early preparedness and sustained learning gains.
- **Strengthen district FLN units:** Provide continuous funding and institutional accountability through state-level reviews.
- **Institutionalize annual diagnostics:** Build system-wide assessments (e.g., oral FLN assessments) to detect learning gaps early.
- **Community and political ownership:** Gram Sabhas, panchayats, and parents must be engaged in spreading awareness and tracking outcomes.

Conclusion: -

- The success of NIPUN Bharat so far shows what is possible when the education system puts learning at the center. But early progress must not lead to complacency. As India aspires for a **Viksit Bharat by 2047**, ensuring foundational learning for every child is non-negotiable. **As Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam rightly said, "Learning gives creativity, creativity leads to thinking, thinking provides knowledge, and knowledge makes you great."** In many ways, NIPUN Bharat has laid out the foundational tracks for this journey.

Question for Practice: -

- The NIPUN Bharat Mission reflects a systemic shift in prioritising foundational literacy and numeracy, but sustaining its momentum requires structural reforms and community ownership." Discuss.

2.3 National Sports Policy-2025 Empowering citizens through sports**News Context:**

- The Union Cabinet on Tuesday (July 1, 2025) **approved the National Sports Policy 2025**.
- National Sports Policy is a landmark initiative aimed at reshaping the country's sporting landscape and empowering citizens through sports.

Syllabus of Mains – GS 2- Government Policies and Interventions for Development in various sectors and Issues arising out of their Design and Implementation

Vision of the Policy:

- Replacing the 2001 policy with a comprehensive roadmap to make India a global sporting powerhouse, targeting success at the **2036 Olympics**, and achieving Top-5 status by **2047**.
- Developed through consultations with **NITI Aayog**, ministries, states, sports federations, athletes and experts.

Five Strategic Pillars: -**Excellence on the Global Stage:**

- Early talent scouting, competitive leagues, high-performance centres.
- Improved governance of National Sports Federations (NSFs), upgraded coaching, and full integration of sports science, technology and analytics.

Sports for Economic Development:

- Leveraging sports tourism, hosting global events, boosting sports manufacturing
- Enabling sports startups, encouraging CSR and PPP investments, new funding models.

Sports for Social Development:

- Promoting inclusion of women, economically weaker sections, tribal communities, and persons with disabilities
- Reviving indigenous games and enabling diaspora and volunteering engagement.

Sports as a People's Movement:

- Nationwide fitness campaigns, introducing fitness indices in schools, colleges, workplaces
- Ensuring universal access to sports facilities and community-level engagement.

Integration with Education (NEP 2020)

- Embedding sports into school curricula as a structured subject.
- Training educators and enabling dual-career pathways for student-athletes.

Strategic & Institutional Framework: -**1. Governance Reforms-**

- National Sports Governance Bill 2025 (proposed):
 - Establishes **National Sports Board** for oversight.
 - NSFs must meet **transparency, term-limit, and RTI** requirements.
 - Covers **BCCI**, making it accountable under sports laws.
 - Introduces **National Sports Election Panel** for NSF elections.

2. Institutional Coordination-

- States encouraged to adopt **Model State Sports Policy**.
- Sports to be mainstreamed across ministries (Health, Education, Rural Dev).
- Inter-ministerial coordination for grassroots implementation.

3. Funding & Economic Incentives-

- **Mobilization of funds via:**
 - Public-Private Partnerships (PPP)
 - Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)
 - Startup support and innovation fund
- Tax benefits and infrastructure incentives for private investors.

4. Monitoring & Technology

- Athlete management dashboards using **AI and data analytics**.
- Performance tracking for all government-funded athletes.
- Evaluation systems to ensure transparency and outcome-based funding.

Evolution of sports policies: -**National Sports Policy 1984**

- **Aim:** Promote physical fitness and excellence in sports.

Key Features:

- Emphasis on the 3-tier structure: school, college, elite level.
- Recognition of sports as a national priority.
- Creation of sports bodies like **Sports Authority of India (SAI)** (est. 1984).
- Promotion of rural and indigenous games.

National Sports Policy 2001

- **Aim:** Achieve broad-based sports participation + international excellence.

Key Features:

- **Two-fold objectives:**

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- Promote sports culture & physical fitness.
- Enhance India's international sporting performance.
- Partnerships between Centre, States, NGOs, and private sector.
- Development of sports infrastructure, coaching standards, and talent identification.
- Incentives for medal winners and encouragement for women's participation.
- Promoted **Panchayat-level involvement** in rural sports.

Key Challenges: -

Implementation Gaps Across States-

- Uneven sports infrastructure and policy execution between urban and rural areas.
- States may lack resources or political will to adopt the Model State Sports Policy.

Governance Resistance-

- Established sports bodies (like BCCI) may resist regulatory oversight and inclusion under RTI.
- Pushback expected on term limits and transparency clauses from some federations.

Inclusion Without Enforcement-

- While the policy promotes inclusion (women, PwDs, transgender), there are no legally binding targets or timelines.
- Risks becoming symbolic without enforceable guidelines or affirmative action.

Overdependence on Private Sector-

- Heavy reliance on PPPs, CSR, and private investment may leave underfunded regions underserved.
- Risk of urban-centric development and neglect of tribal/rural talent pools.

Lack of Focus on e-Sports-

- The fast-growing e-sports industry is not covered in the policy.
- Missed opportunity to regulate and promote this emerging segment.

Monitoring and Evaluation Complexity -

- Implementation of AI/data-driven dashboards requires trained personnel and technological capacity at grassroots levels.
- States and districts may struggle with digital infrastructure.

Limited Sports Research & Education Ecosystem -

- India's sports science, biomechanics, and coaching education systems are still underdeveloped.
- Insufficient support for evidence-based training and performance optimization.

Short-Term Focus on Olympics May Undermine Long-Term Culture -

- Heavy emphasis on elite performance (e.g., 2036 Olympics) may sideline community sports and lifelong physical fitness.

Way forward: -

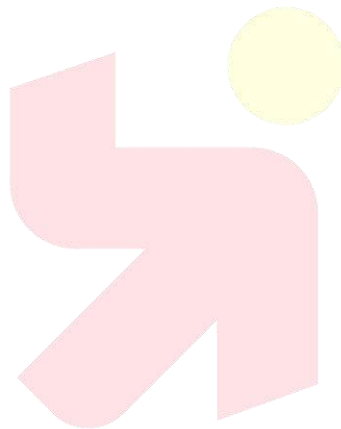
- **Strengthen State-Level Implementation:** -Incentivize states to adopt the Model State Sports Policy through performance-linked central assistance.
- **Legal Backing for Inclusion Goals:** -Enforce clear quotas or mandates for women, persons with disabilities (PwDs), and transgender athletes in teams, events, and funding and create grievance redressal mechanisms for discrimination in sports.
- **Fast-Track Sports Governance Reforms:** -Expedite the passage of the **National Sports Governance Bill 2025** and ensure independence and transparency in the functioning of NSFs through RTI, fixed terms, and audits.
- **Promote e-Sports and Emerging Disciplines:** - Include **e-sports**, adventure sports, and urban youth sports (e.g. skateboarding, parkour) in future updates and set up regulatory frameworks and digital infrastructure support.
- **Invest in Sports Science & Research:** -Establish national centres for **sports science, coaching education, biomechanics, and nutrition.** Collaborate with academic institutions and foreign training centres.

Conclusion: -

- The **National Sports Policy 2025** marks a bold step in reimagining India's sports landscape—from elite global competitiveness to grassroots inclusiveness. With its holistic framework, it aligns sports with education, economy, and national pride. However, its success will depend on **robust governance, inclusive execution, and long-term cultural transformation**. If effectively implemented, it can unlock India's demographic dividend and elevate sports from recreation to a **nation-building force**.

Question for practice:

- The National Sports Policy 2025 aims to reform India's sports ecosystem through structural and legal interventions. "Discuss the key features of the policy and evaluate its potential in ensuring sports governance and inclusivity in India. **(15 Marks, 250 words)**"



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3.General Studies III

3.1 Gig Economy

News Context?

- The Union government has, for the first time, **permitted the use of bike taxis through aggregators**, subject to approval from **state governments**.
- It is seen as bringing some relief to bike taxi operators, especially in states like Karnataka, where a recent ban on bike taxis had reportedly stripped thousands of gig workers of their primary source of income.
- Last year, **Karnataka government published** draft Karnataka Platform-based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Bill.

Syllabus of Mains – GS 3- Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization, of resources, growth, **development and employment.**

Definition:

- As per Code on Social Security, 2020**, it means a person who performs work or participates in a work arrangement and earns from such activities **outside of traditional employer-employee relationship**.
- It is a **free and global market where companies and contractors** (independent workers) **set short term and on demand professional relationships** that are both flexible and skill based.
- Gig Worker:** These are workers who are **engaged “on demand”** by the companies on short- term contacts or **freelance work** instead of full-time basis.
- Example** – Zomato delivery, Uber Drivers

Two categories:

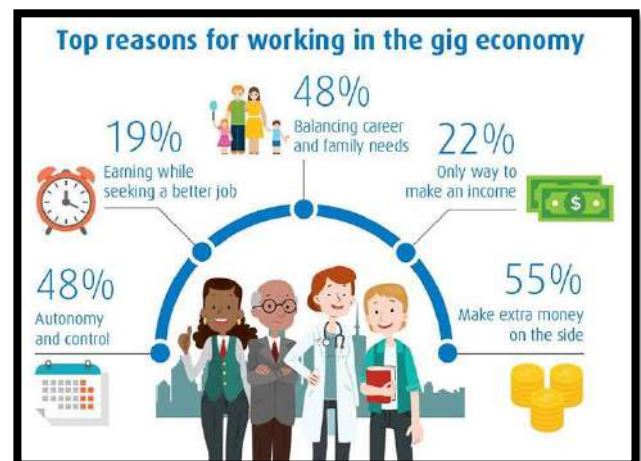
- Platform based:** Whose work is based on online software apps or digital platforms. E.g., delivery workers of Zomato.
- Non-platform based:** Casual wage workers in conventional sectors, working part-time or full-time. E.g., domestic workers.

Data and Facts

- There has been a **rising share of gig workers in the economy at the rate of 20% in the overall hiring** intent by employment type.
- According to NITI Aayog** at present there are **As of FY 2024–25**, estimates suggest **9–11 million gig workers in India**, with expectations to grow to **23.5 million by 2029–30**.
- According to an **estimate around 60% of the new employment is created by the gig world**.
- India's Gig Economy is **expected to grow at a CAGR of 17% to \$750 billion by 2025**(ASSOCHAM).

Why Gig Worker Preferred in The Economy?

- Job Flexibility:** Gig Economy offers flexible work hours and no attendance restrictions.
- Jobs for Low-skilled Workers:** Gig Economy provides opportunities for low-skilled workers due to project-based or less time-consuming jobs.
- Chance to Gain Experience:** Students can gain skills and experience before entering full-time employment.
- No Age Barrier:** The Gig Economy offers employment opportunities for both young and retired individuals.
- Beneficial for Women:** Women can take career breaks and still earn independently through the Gig Economy.
- Cost Efficiency for Employers:** Hiring gig workers allows companies to reduce costs associated with full-time employees, such as benefits, insurance, and long-term commitments.
- Based on demand:** Employers can scale their workforce based on demand without the overhead costs of permanent employment.



Factors Driving Growth of the Gig Economy in India:

Increased Smartphone and Mobile Penetration:

- The widespread use of smartphones and affordable internet access (India has the highest mobile data consumption per smartphone user globally) has enabled businesses to connect directly with gig workers through apps and online platforms.

Changing Work Preferences:

- Millennials and Gen Z prioritize work-life balance and flexibility, which the gig economy offers. Workers can choose their projects, set their schedules, and work from anywhere.
- **Example:** A graphic designer in Delhi can take on freelance projects on platforms like Upwork while pursuing a passion for photography, a flexibility not available in traditional 9-to-5 jobs.

Rise of Startup Culture and E-commerce Growth:

- India has seen a surge in startups, with over 16,000 new tech companies launched in 2020 alone. The flourishing startup ecosystem heavily relies on gig workers for tasks like content creation, web development, and marketing.
- E-commerce growth also demands a large, flexible workforce for logistics, delivery, and customer service roles, fueling the gig economy.

Consumer Demand for Convenience:

- As urban consumers demand more convenient and quick services, such as food delivery, e-commerce, and cab services, gig workers are increasingly needed to fill roles like delivery executives, drivers, and other on-demand services.

Abundance of Low-Cost Labor:

- Semi-skilled and unskilled labor makes up a significant portion of gig jobs in India. About 47% of gig work is in medium-skilled jobs, and 31% is in low-skilled jobs.
- India's vast pool of semi-skilled and unskilled labor, combined with a lack of formal employment opportunities, fuels the gig economy. This labor surplus drives platforms to offer lower wages and often poor working conditions, contributing to growth.

Challenges for Gig Workers:

- **Digital Divide:** Limited access to internet services and digital technology restricts the ability of many workers, especially in rural areas, to participate in the gig economy.
- **Data Protection Concerns:** Platform companies often make opaque decisions about how they collect, store, and share personal data, impacting the Right to Privacy of gig workers.
- **Lack of 'Employee' Status:**
 1. Gig workers are not considered employees, which leads to several issues, such as:
 2. Inability to form unions to advocate for their rights.
 3. Exploitative contracts and limited legal protections.
- **Uncertain Nature of the Job:** Gig workers face job insecurity, irregular wages, and an unpredictable employment status, making long-term financial planning difficult.
- **Lack of Social Protection:** Gig workers do not have access to standard employee benefits such as Health Insurance, Employees Provident Fund (EPF), or paid leave, leaving them vulnerable in times of need.
- **Algorithmic Management:** Many gig workers are subject to algorithmic management, where their performance is monitored and evaluated through algorithms. This can create stress and pressure to meet high performance standards based on ratings, without consideration for human factors.

GIG ECONOMY PROS AND CONS

Workers in a gig economy can enjoy a number of advantages, but there also are potential disadvantages. The pros and cons include:



Steps Taken for the Gig Economy in India:

- **Code on Social Security, 2020:** This code extends social security benefits to gig workers, ensuring they receive similar protections as formal employees.
- **Code on Wages, 2019:** Introduces a universal minimum wage and a floor wage that applies across both the organized and unorganized sectors, including gig workers.
- **e-SHRAM Portal:** A national database of unorganized workers, including gig workers, that helps in registration and delivery of social security benefits.
- **Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY):**
 - Provides accidental insurance coverage of Rs. 2 lakh per year to eligible registered unorganized workers, including gig workers, offering financial protection in case of accidents.
 - **Centre for Labour Studies, National Law School of India University (NLSUI), Bangalore:** Engaged to assist in framing a new scheme for gig and platform workers, as well as other unorganized sector workers.
 - A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between the Employees Provident Fund Organization (EPFO) and NLSUI to support the development of these schemes.

Way-Forward: -

Proper Estimation of Gig Workers:

- Conduct separate enumeration exercises to accurately estimate the number of gig workers and understand their needs.

Skill Development for Platform Jobs:

- Promote outcome-based, platform-led models of skilling and job creation to address the specific needs of gig workers.
- Integrate employment and skill development portals (e.g., e-Shram, National Career Services, Udyam) with the ASEEM portal for better accessibility to jobs and training.

Universal Social Security Coverage:

- Extend social security measures to gig workers in a partnership mode as envisioned in the Code on Social Security, 2020.
- This should include paid sick leave, occupational disease and work accident insurance, retirement/pension plans, and other contingency benefits.

Tripartite Dialogue:

- Establish a **tripartite dialogue between governments, platform unions, and employer-based organizations (EBMOs)** to address labor issues and improve worker well-being in the platform economy.

Catalyze Platformization:

- Introduce a **Platform India initiative (similar to Startup India)** to promote platform-based businesses.
- This initiative could help self-employed individuals sell products, provide services, and expand market access, such as ferrying passengers or delivering goods.

Accelerate Financial Inclusion:

- Provide institutional credit to vulnerable gig workers by designing financial products specifically for them.
- Leverage the FinTech industry to improve access to financial services for platform workers.

Enhancing Social Inclusion in the Digital Economy:

- Enable marginalized groups, including women workers and persons with disabilities (PwDs), to access employment opportunities in the platform sector through skill development and financial access.

Conclusion: -

- The gig economy offers flexibility but exposes workers to insecurity. **Comprehensive measures like social security, skill development, and financial inclusion are essential** for a sustainable and inclusive gig workforce in India.

Question for Practice: -

- "Discuss the role of the gig economy in reshaping India's labour market. What are the key challenges and opportunities associated with its growth?" (150W-10M)

3.2 Quantum Technology and India

News Context: -

- UN designated 2025 to be **International Year of Quantum Science and Technology**.
- As the **global tech race intensifies**, quantum technology is becoming crucial to digital, economic, and national security. India must now focus not just on investing in quantum capabilities but on forging strategic alignments to stay competitive.

Syllabus of Mains – GS 3- Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics, nano-technology, bio-technology

About: -

- Year 2025 was chosen as it **recognizes 100 years since the initial development** of quantum mechanics.
- German physicist **Werner Heisenberg published** a famous paper which led to the discovery of phenomena called quantum mechanics.

What is Quantum Mechanics and Quantum Entanglement?

- Mechanics is the branch of physics that deals with the movement and interaction of various bodies.
- Mechanics has two parts - classical and quantum.**
- Classical or Newtonian** mechanics is the mathematical study of the motion of macroscopic objects and the forces that affect them.
- Quantum mechanics** is a subfield of physics that describes the behaviour of particles — atoms, electrons, photons and almost everything in the molecular and sub molecular realm.
- 2 basic principles of quantum mechanics are:
 - Quantum entanglement:** It explains how two subatomic particles can be intimately linked to each other.
 - Quantum superposition:** It is a theory that subatomic particles exist in multiple states simultaneously.
- One important difference in the behaviour of quantum systems, when compared to classical rigid bodies, is the concept of entanglement.

- **Quantum entanglement is a phenomenon** *by which a pair of subatomic particles are allowed to exist in a shared state where they have complementary properties, such that by measuring the properties of one particle, one can automatically know the properties of the other particle.*
- This is true regardless of how far apart the two particles are transported.
- Quantum entanglement was **first elucidated by Erwin Schrödinger in 1935, leading to his well-known cat paradox.**

Importance of Quantum Technology

- **Massive Market Potential:** By 2040, the global quantum technology market is **projected to reach \$100 billion**, with the quantum communication segment alone expected to cross \$13 billion by 2034.
- **Power to Shape Global Rules:** Nations that lead in quantum computing, encryption, and sensing will shape digital governance norms and global standards.
- **Current Leaders:** The **US and China dominate the quantum race** through control over high-end fabrication, cryogenic systems, and laser technologies.
- **Strategic Edge:** Nations that lead in quantum computing, encryption, and sensing will gain **significant influence over global digital standards and cyber governance norms.**
- **Cybersecurity Importance:** Quantum technology is essential for national security, as it **enables Quantum Key Distribution (QKD)**, which provides virtually unhackable communication.

India's Quantum Achievements: -

- **Progress in Quantum Ecosystem** –India has made notable strides in both quantum hardware development and secure communication technologies.
- **Indigenous Quantum Processor** – **Ajeya, India's first 6-qubit superconducting quantum processor**, was jointly developed by DRDO and TCS, and designed at TIFR.
- **Full-Stack Quantum Control** – India's first full-stack quantum control system has been developed through a **collaboration between DRDO and TCS**, enhancing domestic capability in hardware-software integration.
- **Quantum Communication Trials** – **Successful 100 km-long Quantum Key Distribution (QKD)** trials have been conducted via optical fibre and free space by DRDO-IIT Delhi and ISRO-RRI.
- **Quantum Sensing and Navigation** – **DRDO is advancing quantum metrology** for high-precision sensing and navigation applications in defence and strategic domains.
- **Industry Contribution** – Startups like Nav Wireless are working on **Free Space Optical Communication systems** to support secure quantum communication infrastructure.

India's Advantage in Quantum Technology: -

- **Strong Talent Base** – India ranks **second globally with over 91,000 quantum-ready graduates**, ensuring a deep and scalable knowledge pool.
- **Mathematical Proficiency** – India has **core strengths in areas like tensor algebra, Monte Carlo methods**, and quantum Fourier transforms, which are foundational for quantum algorithm design.
- **Cost-Effective Execution Model** – India's mission-mode implementation and **frugal engineering approach** enable low-cost scaling of quantum hardware and research infrastructure.
- **Indigenous Capability Focus** – The **National Quantum Mission (NQM)** promotes local development of quantum components like photonics, cryogenic systems, and semiconductor fabrication units.
- **Thriving Startup Ecosystem** – India is witnessing the emergence of quantum-focused startups in domains like secure communication, quantum sensing, and software simulation (e.g., QNu Labs, BosonQ Psi).
- **Government Policy Support** – Flagship initiatives like Digital India, Atmanirbhar Bharat, and the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS) complement the quantum ecosystem.
- **Academic and R&D Strength** – Institutions like IISc, IITs, TIFR, RRI, and IIT-Madras's Quantum Centre are leading quantum research with global collaborations and pilot projects.
- **International Collaborations** – India is partnering with nations like France, Finland, Israel, and the US for knowledge exchange, joint research, and standardization in quantum technology.

Challenges for India: -

- **Scaling Challenges:** Tightening export restrictions and limited access to skilled engineers are major barriers to scaling quantum capabilities (NITI Aayog).
- **Funding Deficit:** **Only 2.63% of Indian research is backed by industry** while 17% of research projects remain unfunded.

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- **Human Capital Gap:** The **Quad Investors Network flags a shortage of quantum engineers** as a key limitation. Many young researchers migrate abroad due to better labs and funding.
- **Supply Chain Dependency: No indigenous quantum chip fabrication units.** Dependence on imports for cryogenic systems, lasers, and rare materials like indium.
- **Limited Global Integration:** Collaborative efforts are narrow, **with only a few partnerships** (e.g., Infosys-Quintessence Labs) addressing quantum cybersecurity.
- **Insignificant Private Sector Investment:** Currently stands at **only \$30 million**, far behind USA (\$6,940 million) and Australia (\$661 million).

Government Initiatives: -

- **Budget Allocation:** NQM allocates ~₹6,000 crore for quantum computing, communication, sensing etc.
- **T-Hubs:** Thematic Hubs under NQM are established at IISc, IIT Madras, IIT Bombay, and IIT Delhi.
- **Application Lab:** MeitY's QCAL lab supports public-sector quantum applications.
- **Startup Funding:** A \$1.2 billion fund under RDI scheme backs quantum and deep-tech startups.
- **Talent Pipeline:** QIndia and DST support quantum education from school to undergraduate levels.

Strategic Recommendations for Advancing Quantum Technology in India: -

- **Deepen Global Partnerships** – India should strengthen collaboration with strategic partners such as the US, EU, South Korea, and Australia through initiatives like India-US TRUST and Quantum Entanglement Exchange to gain access to advanced research infrastructure and technologies.
- **Maximize National Quantum Mission (NQM)** – The National Quantum Mission should serve as the central framework for developing indigenous capabilities across quantum computing, communication, sensing, and advanced material research.
- **Influence Global Standards** – India must proactively engage in international quantum standards forums to ensure its technologies are interoperable and globally recognized, and establish a Quantum Standards Authority for domestic certification and compliance.
- **Foster Startup Collaboration** – Promote cross-border innovation by supporting quantum startup collaboration through platforms like T-Hub (India), Seoul Startup Hub (South Korea), and INDUS-X, encouraging joint R&D and funding.
- **Identify and Bridge R&D Gaps** – Conduct a national mapping of quantum R&D gaps in funding, human capital, and supply chains, and implement measures like talent visa schemes and lab autonomy policies to attract and retain top Indian-origin scientists.

Conclusion: -

- Quantum technology is poised to redefine global technological leadership, with strategic implications across defence, cybersecurity, and high-performance computing. **The National Quantum Mission (NQM), as outlined by the Department of Science and Technology, reflects India's intent** to develop indigenous quantum infrastructure and position itself among the top global players by 2031.
- **According to the Economic Survey 2020-21**, quantum technologies are **among the ten high-priority sectors for India's future, with the potential to deliver exponential economic returns.**
- Experts from the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and IIT-Madras **emphasize that India's strength lies in its talent pool and cost-effective innovation models**, but caution that without sustained investment and global collaboration, India may lag behind in standard-setting and hardware development.

Question for Practice: -

- "Quantum technology has been identified as a priority sector in the Economic Survey and is central to India's science diplomacy. Critically examine the role of expert institutions and government initiatives in building quantum capacity in India." (250 words-10M)

PRAYAAS Shorts- UPSC & MPSC

1. Financial Stability Report

- **Context:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has released the Financial Stability Report (FSR) for June 2025.

Highlights of the June 2025 Financial Stability Report:

- India continues to be a major contributor to global economic growth, driven by stable macroeconomic fundamentals and prudent policy measures.
- External risks include prolonged geopolitical tensions, global trade disruptions, and climate-related uncertainties, which may affect growth momentum.
- The **gross non-performing asset (GNPA) ratio stood at 2.3 percent as of March 2025**, marking a multi-decade low.

About the Financial Stability Report (FSR):

- It is a biannual publication of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- The report presents the collective assessment of the Sub-Committee of the **Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC)**.
- It provides insights into systemic risks and the resilience of the Indian financial system, including the results of macro-stress tests.

1.1 Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC)

- Set up in **2010** as a **non-statutory apex body**.
- Based on recommendation of **Raghuram Rajan Committee (2008)**.
- Aims to **strengthen financial stability** and **inter-regulatory coordination**.
- **Chairperson:** Union Finance Minister.
- Members include: **Governor, RBI**, Chairpersons of **SEBI, IRDAI, PFRDA, IBBI**, Finance Secretary, Secretary (DEA), Secretary (DFS), Chief Economic Adviser
- **Sub-Committee of FSDC** is headed by the **RBI Governor**.

2. Space-Based Surveillance-III Programme

- **Context:** -The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) headed by Prime Minister has approved **phase III of its Space Based Surveillance (SBS) mission**.

About: -

- Will launch **52 satellites** (21 by **ISRO**, 31 by **private firms**).
- Satellites to be deployed in **LEO and GEO orbits**.

- Dedicated satellites for **Army, Navy, and Air Force**.
- Supported by acquisition of **31 Predator drones** from the **USA**.
- Includes **joint military satellite projects with France**.
- Strengthened by **India's anti-satellite (ASAT) missile capability**.

2.1 Space Based Surveillance (SBS) mission

- Aims to provide **land and maritime domain awareness** for **civilian and military use**.
- Enables **real-time surveillance** for defence, security, and strategic planning.
- To be implemented by the **National Security Council Secretariat and Defence Space Agency (Ministry of Defence)**.

3. World of Debt Report 2025

- **Context:** -Recently the **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)** released its annual report titled "**A World of Debt 2025**".

About:

- **Global Public Debt (GPD)** reached a record **\$102 trillion in 2024**.
- If current trends persist, **GPD could reach 100% of global GDP by 2030**.
- **Developing countries** hold **\$31 trillion**, less than one-third of total GPD, but their debt has grown **twice as fast** as that of developed nations since 2010.
- **Regional Share of Public Debt (Developing Countries):** Asia and Oceania: 24%, Latin America and Caribbean: 5%, Africa: 2%.

3.1 United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD):

- Established in **1964** as a **permanent intergovernmental body**.
- **Headquarters:** Geneva, Switzerland.
- Functions under the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)**.
- **Membership:** **195 countries**.
- India is a **founding member** of UNCTAD.
- Publishes key reports: **Trade and Development Report, World Investment Report, Technology and Innovation Report, A World of Debt Report**

4. QUAD's Sea Ship Observer Mission

- **Context:** The **first-ever 'QUAD at Sea Ship Observer Mission'** was launched by the Coast Guards of **India, Japan, the USA, and Australia**

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under the framework of the **Wilmington Declaration**

About: -

- Conducted aboard the **US Coast Guard Cutter (USCGC) Stratton**, currently en route to **Guam**.
- **Two officers** (including **women officers**) from each QUAD country are participating in the mission.
- Represents **unprecedented cross-embarkation** and operational collaboration among QUAD Coast Guards.
- Aims to enhance: Maritime domain awareness, Interoperability, Joint readiness and coordination.
- Supports a **Free, Open, Inclusive, and Rules-Based Indo-Pacific**.

4.1 Wilmington Declaration:

- Adopted during the **QUAD Coast Guard Summit** held in **Wilmington, USA** in **March 2024**.
- Marks the **first formal cooperation framework among the Coast Guards** of the **QUAD countries – India, USA, Japan, and Australia**.
- Aims to enhance **maritime security cooperation** in the **Indo-Pacific region**.

5.National Turmeric Board in Nizamabad

Context:

- The **Ministry of Commerce & Industry** has established the **National Turmeric Board of India** at **Nizamabad, Telangana**, a major turmeric-growing region.

About:

- **Established by:** Ministry of Commerce & Industry
- **Location:** Nizamabad, Telangana
- **Nature:** Non-statutory body
- **Purpose:** To promote **development, value addition, and export** of turmeric and turmeric-based products.

5.1 Turmeric (Curcuma longa):

- Belongs to the **Ginger family (Zingiberaceae)**; a **flowering plant** grown for its rhizomes.
- Grows best in **temperatures between 20–30°C** with **high rainfall**.
- India is the **largest producer, consumer, and exporter**, accounting for **75% of global production**.
- Known in **Ayurveda** as '**Haridra**'; possesses **anti-bacterial** and **anti-inflammatory** properties.
- Over **30 varieties** of turmeric are cultivated across **20+ states** in India.

- **Major producing states:** Maharashtra, Telangana, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu
- **Top export destinations:** Bangladesh, United Arab Emirates (UAE), United States of America (USA), Malaysia.

6.Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

Context:

- In 2025, the **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)** celebrates **50 years** of regulating the world's international wildlife trade

About:

- Originally conceived in **1963** at an **IUCN meeting**; entered into force in **1975**.
- **Type:** **Voluntary international agreement** among governments
- **Aim** to ensure that **international trade** in wild animals and plants does **not threaten their survival**
- **Trade Regulation:** Controls **import, export, and re-export** via a **licensing system**
- **Parties:** 185 (states + regional economic integration organizations)
- India ratified in 1976
- **Secretariat:** Administered by **UNEP**, based in **Geneva, Switzerland**
- **IUCN** provides **scientific and technical support**
- **Implementation:** Through **national legislation** of each party
- **Legally binding**, but does **not override domestic laws**

7.Central Adoption Resource Authority

Context:

- The **Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA)** clarified that **digitally certified adoption orders** sent via **email** are **legally valid**, and **physical copies** are **not mandatory** under current adoption rules.

About: -

- **Statutory body** under the **Ministry of Women and Child Development**.
- Originally established in **1990** as an **autonomous body**.
- Became a **statutory body** through **Section 68 of the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015**.

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- **International Role:** Designated as **Central Authority** under the **Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption, 1993** (ratified by India in 2003).

Key Functions of CARA:

- **Monitor and regulate** all adoption procedures across India.
- **Process applications** for adoption by NRIs, OCIs, and foreign nationals.
- **Issue No Objection Certificates (NOC)** and **Conformity Certificates** under Hague Convention.

8. Project 17A

Context: -

- **INS Udaygiri**, the **second ship** of the **Project 17A (P-17A)** indigenous stealth frigates, was **delivered to the Indian Navy**.

About: -

- Follow-on project to the **Project 17 (Shivalik-class)** stealth frigates.
- Aims to build **7 advanced stealth frigates** for the Indian Navy.
- Ships are being constructed at **Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd (MDL), Mumbai** and **Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata**.
- Designed by the **Warship Design Bureau**, Indian Navy.
- Hull is **4.54% larger** than that of Project 17 ships.
- Equipped with a Combined **Diesel or Gas (CODOG)** propulsion system.
- Includes **Controllable Pitch Propellers (CPP)** and **Integrated Platform Management System (IPMS)**.
- Part of India's push for **indigenous warship production and blue-water capabilities**.

8.1 Project 17 (P-17):

- First indigenous stealth frigate project of the **Indian Navy**.
- Developed by **Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), Mumbai**.
- Designed by the **Warship Design Bureau** (formerly Directorate of Naval Design).
- Comprises **three stealth frigates**: **INS Shivalik**, **INS Satpura**, **INS Sahyadri**
- Commissioned between **2010 and 2012**.

9. GOSAT-GW Satellite

Context:

- **Japan launched the GOSAT-GW climate monitoring satellite** aboard its **H-2A rocket**,

marking the **50th and final flight** of the H-2A launcher before retirement.

About GOSAT-GW Satellite:

- **Full form:** Global Observing Satellite for Greenhouse Gases and Water Cycle
- **Developed by:** **Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA)**
- **Launch partner:** **Mitsubishi Heavy Industries (MHI)**
- **Launch vehicle:** **H-2A rocket** (liquid-fueled with solid boosters)
- **Launch site:** **Tanegashima Space Centre, Japan**
- **Series:** Third satellite in Japan's **GOSAT series**
- **Primary focus:** **Climate monitoring** at a **global scale**

10. Microcrystalline Cellulose

Context:

- A fatal industrial accident occurred at the **Sigachi Industries pharma unit** in **Hyderabad**, which manufactures **Microcrystalline Cellulose (MCC)**, resulting in **36 deaths**.

About Microcrystalline Cellulose (MCC):

- **Source:** Extracted from **refined wood pulp** (fibrous plant material).
- **Structure:** Crystalline due to tightly packed **microfibrils** with strong **hydrogen bonding**.
- **Physical nature:** Free-flowing, **powdery**, **chewable**, and **nontoxic**.
- **Digestibility:** **Inert**, not degraded during digestion, and **not absorbed** in the gastrointestinal tract.

Applications of MCC: -

- Acts as a **bulking agent** in the **food industry**.
- Used as a **binder, emulsifier, extender, and texturizer** in the **pharmaceutical industry**.
- Plays a key role in **tablet formulation**, helps in adjusting **drug weight**, enhancing **active ingredient delivery**, and **tablet uniformity**.

11. Financial Fraud Risk Indicator (FRI)

Context:

- The Reserve Bank of India has mandated all banks—including scheduled commercial banks, small finance banks, payment banks, and co-operative banks—to integrate the **Financial Fraud Risk Indicator (FRI)** to enhance digital transaction security.

About

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- Developed by the **Digital Intelligence Unit (DIU)** under the **Department of Telecommunications (DoT)**
- Classifies mobile numbers into **Medium, High, or Very High** financial fraud risk categories
- Based on inputs from: National Cybercrime Reporting Portal (NCRP), Chakshu platform (DoT), Intelligence from banks and financial institutions.
- Shared with stakeholders like banks, NBFCs, UPI providers for **real-time fraud detection and mitigation**
- Enables actions such as: Declining suspicious transactions, issuing customer alerts or warnings, Delaying high-risk financial activities
- Supported by **Mobile Number Revocation List (MNRL)** issued by DIU, listing numbers disconnected due to cybercrime or misuse
- Already adopted by entities like **PhonePe, Paytm, HDFC Bank, PNB, ICICI Bank, India Post Payments Bank**

12.Operation- MED MAX

Context:

- The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) has busted a major international drug trafficking network through **Operation Med Max**, exposing links across four continents and involving advanced technologies like encrypted apps and cryptocurrencies.

About Operation Med Max:

- Launched by the Narcotics **Control Bureau (NCB)** in **May 2024**.
- Initiated with seizure of **3.7 kg of Tramadol tablets** from a car in **Delhi**.
- Uncovered a **transnational drug syndicate** operating in **over 10 countries** across **4 continents**.
- Syndicate used **encrypted communication apps, drop shipping, and cryptocurrency payments**.
- Led to arrest of a **money launderer in Alabama (USA)**.

12.1 Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB):

- **Established:** 1986 under the provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi
- **Status:** Apex drug law enforcement and intelligence agency of India
- **Role:** Combat production, trafficking, and abuse of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances

- Collaborate with agencies like **CBI, ED, DRI, Customs, and State Police Forces**
- Monitor India's obligations under UN drug control treaties

13. 3 by 35" initiative

Context:

- The World Health Organization (WHO) has launched a "3 by 35" to urge countries to raise real prices on tobacco, alcohol, and sugary drinks.

About

- Launched by the **World Health Organization (WHO)** in **2025**.
- Aims to **increase real prices of tobacco, alcohol, and sugary drinks by at least 50% by 2035** through **health taxes**.
- Seeks to **reduce non-communicable diseases (NCDs)** and generate **public revenue**.
- Targets to **prevent 50 million premature deaths** over the next **50 years**.
- Goal to raise **US \$1 trillion** in additional public revenue over the next **10 years**.
- Supported by **global technical and policy partners** for national-level implementation.
- Promotes **country-led reforms** for sustainable health financing and **universal health coverage (UHC)**.
- Health taxes seen as a **cost-effective tool** to discourage harmful consumption patterns.

13.1 World Health Organization (WHO):

- **Established:** 7 April 1948 (celebrated as World Health Day)
- **Headquarters:** Geneva, Switzerland
- **Parent body:** United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)
- **Status:** Specialized agency of the United Nations for international public health
- **Membership:** 194 member states
- India is a founding member

14.PARAKH Portal

Context:

- The **PARAKH RS 2025 survey**, formerly known as the **National Achievement Survey (NAS)**, was recently released, evaluating learning outcomes of students across India in line with **NEP 2020** reforms.

About: -

- **Full Form:** Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development – **Rashtriya Sarvekshan**

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- Set up under **NCERT** as the **national assessment body** mandated by the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**
- Aims to **standardize student assessment practices** across states
- Provides **reliable, comparable data** on **learning outcomes** for evidence-based policymaking

2025 Survey Highlights: -

- Covered **21 lakh students, 74,229 schools, and 781 districts**
- Included **2.7 lakh teachers and school leaders** via questionnaires
- **Subjects tested for Grades 3 & 6:** Language, Mathematics, *The World Around Us*
- **Subjects tested for Grade 9:** Language, Mathematics, Science, Social Science
- **Top Performing States/UTs:** Punjab, Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu

15.volume weighted average price.

Context:

- SEBI has recently mandated the issuance of a **Common Contract Note** with a **single Volume Weighted Average Price (VWAP)** to streamline trading and reporting for institutional investors and market participants.

About: -

- **VWAP** is the **average price of a stock weighted by trading volume** during a particular trading session.
- Used as a **benchmark** to assess the **fairness of trade execution** and to compare the **current market price** with the average traded price.
- Helps investors make informed decisions on **entry and exit points**, and adopt **active or passive** trading strategies.
- **Intraday tool**, calculated from **market open to market close** using real-time data.

16.Endocrine-Disrupting Chemicals

- EDCs are **chemicals that interfere with the endocrine (hormone) system** in humans and animals.
- They can **mimic, block, or alter hormone production**, leading to **developmental, reproductive, neurological, and immune** problems.
- Even **low doses** of EDCs can cause significant health effects, especially during **critical growth periods** (e.g., fetal or early childhood stages).

- **Common Sources of EDCs:** **Industrial chemicals** (e.g., **PCBs, dioxins**), **Plastics** and additives (e.g., **Bisphenol A (BPA), phthalates**), **Pesticides** (e.g., **DDT, atrazine**), **Personal care products** (e.g., **parabens, triclosan**)
- **Health Impacts:** **Early puberty**, infertility, low sperm count, **Obesity**, diabetes, and metabolic disorders, **Thyroid dysfunction**, hormone-related cancers

17.Television Rating Point (TRP)

Context:

- The **Ministry of Information and Broadcasting** has proposed amendments to the **Policy Guidelines for Television Rating Agencies (2014)** to make the **TRP system more representative** of India's diverse and evolving media consumption patterns.

About Television Rating Point (TRP):

- TRP is a **metric to measure viewership and popularity** of TV programmes.
- Higher TRP indicates **greater audience engagement** with a program.
- Used by **advertisers** to decide ad placement and by **investors** to evaluate channel performance.
- In India, **TRP is calculated by BARC (Broadcast Audience Research Council)**.
- BARC is a **joint industry body** representing broadcasters, advertisers, and media agencies.
- Uses **BAR-O-meters** installed in **58,000+ panel households** for real-time data collection.
- Follows the **People Meter technique** and **Picture Matching method** for data recording.
- People Meters record **which channels are watched and for how long**.
- Picture Matching captures a small image of the screen to identify programs watched.
- Data is collected from a sample and **extrapolated to estimate national viewership**.
- **Weekly TRP ratings** are released by BARC every Thursday.

18.Bukkapatna Chinkara Wildlife Sanctuary

Context:

- The **Karnataka Forest Department** recently **recovered 300 acres of encroached land** in the **Bukkapatna Chinkara Wildlife Sanctuary**, located in **Tumakuru district**, reaffirming efforts to protect grassland ecosystems and Chinkara habitat.

About: -

- Located in **Tumakuru district, Karnataka**
- Declared as a **wildlife sanctuary in 2019**
- Established for the **protection and conservation of Chinkara (Indian Gazelle)**
- It is the **second Chinkara sanctuary** in Karnataka after **Yadahalli Wildlife Sanctuary** (Bagalkot, notified in 2016)
- Characterized by **wooded savannahs**, dominated by **grasslands interspersed with native tree species**
- **Key fauna: Chinkara** (Least Concern), **Four-horned antelope** (Vulnerable), **Blackbuck** (Least Concern), **Sloth bear** (Vulnerable), **Leopard** (Vulnerable)
- Plays a vital role in conserving **dryland biodiversity** and **threatened grassland and savannah ecosystems**.

18.1 Chinkara (Indian Gazelle):

- **IUCN Status: Least Concern**
- Native to **India, Pakistan, and Iran**, primarily found in **arid and semi-arid regions**.
- Commonly seen in **Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka**, and parts of the Deccan plateau.
- Inhabits **grasslands, scrublands, and dry deciduous forests**.
- Known for its **slender build, light brown coat**, and distinctive **black stripes on the face**.
- Can **survive without water for days**, deriving moisture from plants—an adaptation to dry habitats.
- Protected under **Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972** in India.

**19. HAM Radio****Context: -**

- Indian astronaut **Shubhanshu Shukla** recently interacted with students across the country via **HAM radio** from the **International Space Station (ISS)**, highlighting its use as a reliable mode of global communication.

About: -

- Also known as **Amateur Radio**; a form of **non-commercial radio communication**.
- Operated by **licensed individuals** for purposes such as **self-training, experimentation, and emergency communication**.
- Regulated in India under the **Indian Wireless Telegraphs (Amateur Service) Rules, 1978** by the **Ministry of Communications**.
- Requires a **valid license** issued by the **Wireless Planning and Coordination Wing (WPC)** of the Department of Telecommunications (DoT).
- HAM radio operators use specific **radio frequency bands** allocated internationally by the **International Telecommunication Union (ITU)**.
- Functions independently of the internet or mobile networks—making it highly useful during **natural disasters** and **emergencies**.
- Commonly used to establish **two-way radio contact** with satellites, space stations (e.g., ISS), and other HAM operators worldwide.

19.1 International Telecommunication Union (ITU):

- **Founded: 1865** as the **International Telegraph Union**; renamed ITU in 1932.
- **Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland**
- **Status: Specialized agency of the United Nations (UN)** for information and communication technologies (ICTs).
- **Membership: 193 member states** and **over 900 sector members** (private companies, academic institutions, etc.)
- **India is a member** of ITU since **1869**.

20. Reserve Bank of India revised the timings SDF and MSF**SDF (Standing Deposit Facility):**

- SDF is a tool through which the **RBI absorbs excess liquidity** from banks **without offering collateral**, unlike the reverse repo.
- It helps maintain the **floor of the policy rate corridor**, thereby supporting effective monetary transmission.
- Introduced in **2022** to strengthen RBI's liquidity management and reduce dependence on collateralized operations.

MSF (Marginal Standing Facility):

- MSF allows scheduled banks to **borrow overnight funds from the RBI** against government securities during liquidity crunch.

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- The **MSF rate is typically 100 basis points above** the repo rate, acting as the **upper bound** of the policy rate corridor.
- It serves as a **last-resort borrowing window** when banks exhaust all other short-term funding options.

- Southern Japan's **Tokara Islands** have experienced over **1,000 earthquakes** in the past two weeks, making it one of the most intense seismic swarms in the region's recorded history.

About:



21.SAKSHAM-3000

Context:

- The **Minister of State for Communications** recently launched **SAKSHAM-3000**, an indigenous high-capacity switch-cum-router developed by **C-DOT** to support India's digital infrastructure.

About SAKSHAM-3000:

- Developed by the **Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT)** under the **Department of Telecommunications (DoT)**.
- It is a **state-of-the-art switch-cum-router** that manages high-speed data traffic for internet and telecom networks.
- Ensures faster, secure, and smooth data flow across large-scale networks like 5G, cloud, and AI systems.
- Can handle massive data volume with extremely low delay and keeps all network parts in perfect sync.
- Used in 5G/6G networks, cloud services, AI workloads, smart cities, defence and government communication systems.

- A small volcanic island chain in the **southern part of Kagoshima Prefecture, Japan**.
- Located in the **Ryukyu Archipelago**, between **Kyushu** and **Amami Islands**.
- It comprises **12 islands**, of which **7 are inhabited**.
- It forms part of the **Nansei Islands** and lies within a **tectonically active zone** on the **Pacific Ring of Fire**.

24.The Prime Minister's multi-nation visit

Context: -

- The Prime Minister of India is on a **multi-nation tour** from **July 2 to July 9, 2025**, visiting **Ghana, Trinidad & Tobago, Argentina, Brazil, and Namibia** to enhance **bilateral cooperation and global strategic ties**.

22.Gini index

Context:

- According to a recent **World Bank report**, India's **Gini Index is 25.5**, making it the **4th most equal country globally**, surpassing all **G7 and G20** nations in income equality.

About

- The **Gini Index** (or Gini Coefficient) is a statistical tool to measure **income or wealth inequality** within a population.
- Developed by **Corrado Gini** in **1912**, it uses the **Lorenz curve** to assess income distribution.
- Ranges from **0 (perfect equality)** to **1 or 100% (perfect inequality)**.
- A **lower Gini score** indicates a more **equal society**; a higher score signals **greater inequality**.
- It is a **relative measure**, not an indicator of a country's total wealth or income..

24.1 Ghana

- Located in **West Africa**; capital – **Accra**.
- First sub-Saharan African country to gain independence (1957).
- India supports Ghana through **Pan-African e-Network** and **developmental aid**.
- Member of **ECOWAS**; cooperation includes **healthcare, ICT, and capacity building**.

23.Tokara Islands

Context:



24.2 Trinidad & Tobago

- Island nation in the **Caribbean Sea**; capital – **Port of Spain**.
- Large **Indian diaspora** (~40%); descendants of indentured labourers.
- Member of **CARICOM**; strong **cultural and historical ties** with India.
- Collaborates with India in **education, culture, and diaspora engagement**.



24.4 Brazil

- Largest country in **South America**; capital – **Brasília**.
- Strategic partner in **BRICS, IBSA, and G20**.
- Collaborates with India on **biofuels, climate change, and UN reforms**.
- India-Brazil trade includes **agro-products, pharma, and defence cooperation**.



24.3 Argentina

- Located in **South America**; capital – **Buenos Aires**.
- Member of **MERCOSUR** trade bloc; key partner in **soy oil exports**.
- Signed MoU with India on **lithium exploration** (critical mineral).
- Bilateral ties include **space, agriculture, and renewable energy cooperation**.

24.5 Namibia

- Located in **Southern Africa**; capital – **Windhoek**.
- Key partner in **wildlife conservation** (Cheetah translocation in 2022).
- Rich in **uranium**; cooperation in **mining, health, and defence training**.
- India supported Namibia's independence and continues **capacity-building initiatives**.



PRAYAAS Shorts- MPSC Specific

1. International News

1.1 'Officer of the Order of the Star'

- PM Modi receives **Ghana's highest state honour** 'Officer of the Order of the Star'
- The prestigious award was **presented by President John Dramani Mahama** during PM Modi's visit to the West African nation.
- He **dedicated the award to the country's youth, its rich cultural heritage**, and the enduring ties between India and Ghana.
- This is the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Ghana in over 30 years

About the Order of the Star of Ghana: -

- Ghana's Highest Civilian Honour
- Conferred by the President of Ghana

1.2 Order of the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi was on Friday (July 4, 2025) conferred** with 'The Order of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago' - the **country's highest civilian honour**.
- This is **Modi's first visit to the country as prime minister** and the first Indian bilateral visit at the prime ministerial level to Trinidad and Tobago since 1999.

1.3 Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

- Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons holds Asia Meeting in New Delhi, 1st - 3rd July, 2025
- The **23rd Regional Meeting of National Authorities of States Parties in Asia**, organised by the OPCW and **hosted by National Authority Chemical Weapons Convention (NACWC) India**, opened on 1st July at Vaniya **Bhawan, New Delhi**

About OPCW & CWC:

- The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) **came into force in 1997**. The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) is the **implementing body for the Chemical Weapons Convention**, with its 193 Member States, it oversees the global endeavour to permanently and verifiably eliminate chemical weapons.
- The **OPCW was awarded the 2013 Nobel Peace Prize** for its extensive efforts in eliminating chemical weapons.
- India is an original signatory** to the Convention.

- The **National Authority Chemical Weapons Convention (NACWC)** is the national authority responsible for implementing the Convention in India.

1.4 Recognise the Taliban govt of Afghanistan

- Russia has become the first country in the world to officially recognize** the Taliban's government in Afghanistan since their takeover in August 2021
- No other country has formally recognised the Taliban government that seized power in August 2021 as U.S.-led forces staged a chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan after 20 years of war.

1.5 17th BRICS Summit

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi is **indeed participating in the 17th BRICS Leaders' Summit being held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on July 6-7, 2025**.
- The visit came at the invitation of Brazilian President Luiz Incio Lula da Silva.
- The **Brics grouping, which initially included Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa**, gradually expanded to include **Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Ethiopia, Indonesia, and Iran**, making it one of the most influential alliances of emerging economies worldwide.

2. National News

2.1 Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) India Region

- Lok Sabha Speaker Shri Om Birla will inaugurate the Annual Conference of Zone II of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) India Region at **Tapovan, Dharamshala** on Monday, 30 June 2025.
- This zone includes the states of Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, and Punjab.
- The **theme of the Conference is: "Good Governance in the Digital Era: Managing Resources, Defending Democracy, and Embracing Innovation"**

About CPA:

- The CPA is a global organization that brings together parliamentarians to strengthen parliamentary democracy.
- The CPA has nine regions globally, which are: Africa; Asia; Australia; British Islands and Mediterranean (BIM); Canada; Caribbean, Americas and the Atlantic (CAA); India; Pacific; and South-East Asia.

2.2 ASEAN-India Cruise Dialogue

- India hosts the **first-ever ASEAN-India Cruise Dialogue in Chennai** to boost maritime cooperation and tourism.
- The Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPSW), Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, inaugurated the first-ever ASEAN India Cruise Dialogue in Chennai today on 30 June 2025.
- The two-day dialogue includes thematic sessions on investment and cruise tourist circuits, and will **continue in Mamallapuram, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.**
- Participants:** Over 30 delegates from all 10 ASEAN countries—Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, and Timor-Leste.

2.3 RailOne App

- RailOne App launched: **One-stop solution for all passenger services at India Habitat Centre in New Delhi** on the 40th Foundation Day of Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS).
- RailOne is focused on improving the passenger interface with railways.
- It is a comprehensive, all-in-one application with a user-friendly interface.
- Railways are continually taking steps to improve passenger amenities. Introducing new generation trains, redeveloping stations, upgrading old coaches to new LHB coaches, and many more such steps have improved the passenger experience in the last decade.
- Modern Passenger Reservation System (PRS) by December 2025

2.4 C-FLOOD

- Union Minister of Jal Shakti Shri C R Patil inaugurates **C-FLOOD, a Unified Inundation Forecasting System**
- C-FLOOD, a Unified Inundation Forecasting System **collaboratively developed by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C DAC), Pune and Central Water Commission (CWC),** Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation (DoWR, RD & GR), Ministry of Jal Shakti
- A **web-based platform providing up to two days' advance inundation forecasts at the village level,** complete with flood inundation maps and water-level predictions
- Currently operational for the Mahanadi, Godavari, and Tapi basins, with plans to expand to other major river systems.

3. State News

3.1 'Digi-Lakshmi'

- The **Government of Andhra Pradesh (AP) launched the 'Digi Lakshmi Scheme'**, a transformative initiative aimed at digitally empowering urban poor women and promoting self-reliance through entrepreneurship.
- The scheme aims to **enable Self-Help Group (SHG) women to become entrepreneurs under the State's 'One Family, One Entrepreneur' (OF-OE) vision,** transforming SHGs into Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

3.2 CM-PRATIGYA Scheme

- Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar announced the launch** of a new initiative aimed at empowering the state's youth through **skill development, internships, and career advancement opportunities.**
- The scheme, titled CM-PRATIGYA (Chief Minister - Promotion of Readiness, Awareness and Technical Insights for Guiding Youth Advancement), has been approved by the state cabinet under the Saat Nischay-2
- The **scheme includes monthly financial support to youths undergoing skill development training and internships:**
 - Rs 4,000 per month for youth who have passed Class 12 and are undergoing skill training.
 - Rs 5,000 per month for ITI or diploma holders undergoing training.
 - Rs 6,000 per month for graduate or postgraduate youths engaged in internships.
 - Target: One lakh internship by 2030

4. Maharashtra

4.1 Hedging Desk in Pune

- Maharashtra CM **inaugurates Hedging Desk in Pune** to help farmers avoid losses
- The state **government is looking at futures and options to help farmers** deal with risk due to price volatility in agricultural produce.
- In what is dubbed to be the **first-ever move by the state, Maharashtra** has opened a hedging desk in Pune covering cotton, the main crop of Vidarbha, as well as turmeric and maize.
- Objective:** To protect farmers from price volatility in agricultural produce through futures and options trading in commodity markets.

5. Economic

5.1 India's external debt rises to \$736 billion, 19.1% of GDP, says RBI

- India's external debt rose to \$736.3 billion at the end of March 2025 from \$668.8 billion a year earlier, according to data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday.
- The debt-to-GDP ratio also inched up to 19.1% from 18.5% in FY24.
- The non-financial corporate sector accounted for the largest share, borrowing \$261.7 billion. Deposit-taking corporations excluding the central bank owed \$202.1 billion, while the government's share of external debt stood at \$168.4 billion.
- The US dollar continued to dominate India's foreign borrowing, accounting for 54.2% of the total external debt. Other currencies in the debt mix included the Indian rupee (31.1%), Japanese yen (6.2%), Special Drawing Rights (4.6%), and euro (3.2%).

5.2 SPREE 2025 (Scheme for Promotion of Registration of Employers and Employees)

- The Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) has approved SPREE 2025 (Scheme for Promotion of Registration of Employers and Employees) during its 196th ESI Corporation Meeting held in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh, under the chairmanship of Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister for Labour & Employment and Youth Affairs & Sports.
- The Scheme for Promotion of Registration of Employers and Employees (SPREE) 2025, approved by the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC), is a special initiative aimed at expanding social security coverage under the ESI Act.
- Employers can register their units and employees digitally through the ESIC portal, Shram Suvidha and MCA portal.

6. Appointment

6.1 Rajesh Kumar

- The Maharashtra government on Monday appointed additional chief secretary (revenue) **Rajesh Kumar as the new chief secretary of the state. (IAS, 1988-batch)**
- Kumar takes **over from Sujata Saunik**, who retired on Monday, 30 June 2025.
- He will continue to hold the post of additional chief secretary (revenue), as per an order issued by V Radha, ACS (services) of the General Administration Department.

Career Highlights:

- Served as CEO, Beed Zilla Parishad

- District Collector of Dharashiv and Jalgaon
- Appointed Additional Chief Secretary (Revenue) since 2020

7. Sport

7.1 Sudhanshu Mittal

- Sudhanshu Mittal **re-elected as president of the Kho Kho Federation of India**
- The Kho Kho Federation of India (KKFI) has announced its newly elected Governing Body after successful elections held at its headquarters in New Delhi On 2 July 2025.

7.2 D Gukesh

- World Champion **D Gukesh wins rapid title at Grand Chess Tour 2025 at Zagreb in Croatia.**
- Reigning World Chess Champion Gukesh Dommaraju claimed the rapid title at the Rapid and Blitz tournament of the Grand Chess Tour 2025, held in Zagreb, Croatia.
- The **19-year-old Indian prodigy defeated Wesley So of the USA** in the final round, sealing the rapid segment with an impressive 14 out of 18 points.
- Gukesh won seven games, including the finale against So in 38 moves with the white pieces.

8. Award

8.1 Radhanath Swami

- A prominent Hindu spiritual leader has been **recognised by New York City officials for his decades of community work and spiritual leadership.**
- Radhanath Swami, a **leading figure in the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON)**, was presented with the New York City honour at an event at the organisation's Bhakti Center in Manhattan's East Village.

8.2 Deepika Padukone

- Actor Deepika Padukone has become the **first Indian to be awarded a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.**

9. Defence

9.1 Country's First Photonic Radar

- On June 30, 2025, New Delhi (Delhi) **based Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO), Ministry of Defence (MoD), has developed India's first indigenous Photonic Radar**, marking a significant milestone in India's air defence technology, with **ultra-high resolution**, stealth detection, and immunity to electronic jamming.
- The radar is expected to undergo extensive trials to validate its performance.

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- The **radar system has been designed by the Bengaluru (Karnataka) based Electronics and Radar Development Establishment (LRDE), a laboratory of the DRDO**, with contributions from private partners under the Technology Development Fund (TDF).

Photonic Radar:

- Photonic radar **replaces traditional microwave Radio Frequency (RF) systems by using light-based technologies, such as lasers and optical fibres**, to generate, transmit, and process signals across millimetre-wave to terahertz (THz) frequency ranges, reaching up to 34 Gigahertz (GHz) with an 11 GHz bandwidth.

9.2 Sub Lt Poonia

- Sub Lt Poonia becomes the **first woman to be inducted into the fighter stream of naval aviation**.
- She was awarded the **prestigious 'Wings of Gold' during a graduation ceremony** at INS Dega in Visakhapatnam.

10. Important Day

10.1 World Asteroid Day – 30 July

- World Asteroid Day is a **United Nations sanctioned global awareness campaign** observed annually on 30 June.
- **Established in 2014 and officially recognised by the UN in 2016**, World Asteroid Day aims to inform the public about how asteroid impacts can affect life on Earth and the importance of developing technologies to detect and deflect potential threats.